

## Corps begins construction of spillway deflectors at Chief Joseph Dam

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SEATTLE - Work is underway by the Corps at Chief Joseph Dam to build spillway deflectors to reduce the dam's total dissolved gas contributions to the Columbia River. High levels of total dissolved gas may be harmful to aquatic life, including salmon that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. This modification to the dam spillway is in accordance with the 2004 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) Biological Opinion (November 30, 2004), concerning the Federal Columbia River Power System effects on listed species, subject to the collaborative remand process overseen by Judge Redden in the U.S. District of Oregon. The project is strongly supported by NOAA, Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Washington Department of Ecology, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and other resource agencies throughout the Columbia basin.

Traylor Brothers Inc., was awarded the spillway deflector installation construction contract by the Corps on August 19, 2005. A crew of about 20 will be working between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., five days a week, for the next two and half years, with occasional Saturday shifts. Work activities will be centered on the face of the spillway near the dewatering caisson - the cofferdam that allows workers to construct spillway deflectors in the dry. To reduce impacts to the public's access to the river, work on the right bank has been limited to a fenced area, and new access stairs have been installed. The comfort station will remain open and fully accessible.

Changes in river and reservoir management may be required to ensure worker's safety below the spillway. Spill may be necessary during the during the construction contract, but may be confined to a group of gates away from the work area, rather than across the whole spillway. The Corps expects that any small changes in the river downstream of Chief Joseph Dam and the Rufus Woods Lake level will have minimal impacts to fish, wildlife, and water quality, and they should not affect recreation, fishing or irrigation.

Tribal anglers will experience some changes in fishing access over the period of the construction. The Corps is planning a meeting with tribal anglers Tuesday, June 27, from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Long House in Nespelem, Wash., to discuss the construction schedule and potential construction impacts to bank access and traffic. The Corps is coordinating this meeting with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Fish and Wildlife Department, which will provide further information. The Tribes Fish and Wildlife office will answer questions regarding the meeting. This office can be contacted at (509) 634-2110.